



# EMS

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STATE DOCUMENTS

## Newsletter

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## Advanced EMTs to be Certified

Emergency Medical Services legislation had a 1-1 record this legislative season with passage of the Emergency Medical Technician bill and defeat of an EMS funding proposal.

House Bill 72, introduced by Reps. Jack K. Moore, R-Great Falls, W. Jay Fabrega, R-Great Falls, Dennis Lester, D-Great Falls, Francis Bardanouve, D-Harlem, and Carl Seifert, R-Polson, met with little opposition in either the House or the Senate.

After consultation with the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences, the Department of Intergovernmental Relations and other organizations or agencies involved, the Board of Medical Examiners will adopt rules for EMT training, certification and emergency procedures allowed by the measure.

The bill authorizes certification of both basic and advanced EMTs by the Board of Medical Examiners.

Two amendments changed the bill to eliminate the liability clause and to provide that ambulance attendants do not have to be EMTs.

Sen. Matt Himsl, R-Kalispell, explained during Senate debate that the liability clause was eliminated because Public Health committee members thought that persons who trained and presented themselves as trained technicians should not be totally immune from liability.

For strictly volunteer services that receive no compensation for services rendered, the "Good Samaritan Act seems to apply," Himsl said.

The measure was drafted by the Montana Medical Association in consultation with the EMS Bureau, Highway Safety and hospital and nurses associations.

Losing on an 8 to 6 vote in the Senate Finance and Claims committee was Senate Bill 73, sponsored by Sen. Joe Roberts, D-Libby.

This bill would have created a continuous source of revenue for emergency medical services by

earmarking 10 per cent of the taxes already collected from health insurance premiums. The fiscal office estimated that between \$300,000 and \$400,000 would have been raised each year for the fund, which would have been distributed according to a need criteria worked out by the EMS Bureau.

Voting for the bill in committee were Sens.: Larry Fasbender, D-Fort Shaw, Mark Etchart, R-Glasgow, Elmer Flynn, D-Missoula, Don Foster, D-Lewistown, Pat Regan, D-Billings, and Sen. Roberts.

(Continued on Page 2)



Dr. John V. Stephens, one of the two principal physicians instructing the Emergency Medical Technician class in Browning, points out the structure of the circulatory system in one of the EMT classes.

—Photo from the Glacier Reporter

## Grant Application To Be Submitted

The statewide application for Emergency Medical Services federal funding will be submitted for final review by April 1, 1975, Robert Quam, EMS Bureau Chief, said.

The application has sought to include the needs of local areas for Emergency Medical Services systems.

Using federal criteria, the EMS Bureau divided the state into three planning regions for the purpose of the EMS grant.

The regions center around the three cities in the state with full-time emergency room physicians in the hospital (one of the criteria) and each area has a population around 230,000 (another minimum criteria).

The divisions put the Central region east of Flathead, Powell, Silver Bow and Madison counties and west of Phillips, Fergus, Judith Basin, Wheatland and Sweet Grass counties. The other regions are bounded by the state lines and the above-mentioned divisions which do not cut across any of the boundaries in the Governor's planning districts.

The resources and needs of the state will be designated according to region.

"We hope for total funding for the state," Quam said. "But the federal people are leaning toward wanting to fund one region at a time."

Quam added that regionalization is "nothing but coordination of local services around a central hospital." Before good regional systems evolve, local areas must develop good systems, he said.

### Correction

The January, 1975 issue of the EMS Newsletter incorrectly stated in "Bureau Activities Summarized" that Havre had the emergency phone number 911.

Dr. S. A. Reynolds, chairman of the Northern Montana Emergency Medical Services Council, notified the Bureau that Havre does not have 911 but that the community has installed a hospital-based communications system for ambulances.

## Ambulance Association Elects New Officers

Montana Ambulance and EMT Association members heard of federal and state legislation that might affect their local operations, learned how various organizations might directly help them and elected officers at their annual meeting January 25, in Billings at the Rimrock Lodge.

## Four Areas to Get Refresher Course on TV

Roundup, West Yellowstone, Whitehall and Colstrip Emergency Medical Technicians who fall asleep in front of the television might have trouble with an experimental EMT refresher course being conducted by educational television from Denver.

These sites were chosen for the experiment because they, in addition to Fort Benton, Busby and Three Forks, are the seven communities in the state to participate in a Satellite Technology Demonstration using the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's ATS-6 satellite.

Only four communities are receiving the EMT refresher course because the other three do not have EMTs in need of the refresher training.

Classes will be conducted in junior high schools that lodge the project equipment each Saturday from March 29 through May 10 for three hour periods. This includes two hours of material transmitted by satellite and one hour of practical instruction at the learning site.

Department of Transportation guidelines for refresher courses are being used in conjunction with a curriculum suggested by physicians and officials from the Rocky Mountain states. An on-site trainer will be available and will use state refresher course certification criteria for the classes.

Among the advantages of using the satellite-to-television transmission are the ability to learn from expert medical instructors, the standardization of instruction, and the ability to reach rural areas.

Although the cost of the project is an estimated \$175,000, the cost to participants is nil since funding is being sought from federal, state and private sources.

Charles Bicsak of Bicsak Ambulance Service in Great Falls is the new association president. Elmer Harriger of Arrow Ambulance in Missoula was elected vice president and Norm Parrent, Big Horn County Civil Defense and Emergency Services director, was re-elected secretary-treasurer.

This experimental learning situation is a cooperative effort by the Mountain States Health Corporation, the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, the Rocky Mountain Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Navaho Nation and state governments in Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, Arizona, Utah, New Mexico, Nevada and Montana.

## Funding Bill Defeated

(Continued from Page 1)

Voting against it were Sens.: Paul Boylan, D-Bozeman, Glen Drake, R-Helena, Matt Himsel, R-Kalispell, Sandy Mehrens, D-Anaconda, Harold Nelson, R-Cut Bank, Miles Romney, D-Hamilton, Stan Stephens, R-Havre, and Corrie Thiessen, D-Lambert.

A fear of earmarking funds surfaced during committee discussion and the one witness to testify against the proposal, Phil Strobe, representing the Life Underwriters Association, suggested the appropriation should be a line item in the Department of Health's budget. "I don't think EMS rises to the level of earmarked fund status," Strobe said.

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Pat Murdo, editor.

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# EMTs Must Retrain to Stay Certified

by Steve Moody  
of the EMS Bureau

"Once an EMT, always an EMT" doesn't apply as far as continued certification by the State Department of Health and Environmental Sciences.

Although the learning gained through an Emergency Medical Technician course cannot be erased, EMTs also need to have their knowledge and skills refreshed and need to be provided information concerning new concepts of emergency medical care.

Since some EMTs do not encounter all of the emergencies that they learn to treat, the Emergency Medical Services Bureau requires

EMTs to take refresher courses every two years to maintain current certification.

To remain certified an EMT must complete an approved EMT refresher course before the expiration date. Three types of refresher courses are recognized.

Most common is the 20-hour EMT refresher course. It consists of 30 instruction modules outlined by the Department of Transportation (DOT) "Refresher training program for Emergency Medical Technician-Ambulance."

Another acceptable plan is to offer the refresher course by conducting regular training sessions conforming with DOT's outline.

This allows communities to maintain continuous training of the EMTs and enables recertification following completion of the 30 modules.

In both cases, prior notice of a refresher class must be given to the Emergency Medical Services Bureau and approval of a coordinator must be obtained. Students must attend a minimum of 26 modules and pass the state final practical examination in order to be recertified.

If fewer than five EMTs need a refresher course, they can use a basic EMT course as a refresher course, but they first must contact the EMS Bureau, obtain permission from the local, basic EMT course coordinator to attend the course, attend all lecture portions of the 81-hour course and attend the practice sessions on cardiopulmonary resuscitation, fractures of the upper and lower extremities, injuries to the spine and extrication. The student must also pass the state final practical examination.

Certification criteria and forms, refresher course outlines and additional information on EMT training can be obtained from Jerry Luchau at the EMS Bureau, 1424 Ninth Avenue, Helena, MT 59601, phone 449-3895.

## Ambulance Services Show Improvement

by Jerry Luchau and  
Drew Dawson  
of the EMS Bureau

Prior to the enactment of the Montana State Ambulance Licensing Law in 1971, very few ambulance services had the training and equipment necessary to provide life support to victims of accidents and medical emergencies.

Since the ambulance regulations, adopted in accordance with the law, became effective in 1972, ambulance services generally have made remarkable improvements.

Most services have been cooperative in meeting the minimal requirements. Many areas, particularly those with Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training, exceed the state ambulance licensing requirements.

However, an analysis of ambulance inspections reveal some problems still exist. A large number of ambulances are not adequate for the provision of life support during transit. As more funding becomes available and there is increased local support for a comprehensive emergency services system, communities are purchasing suitable vehicles.

In the past year, over 10 communities have received new ambulances.

Another area of concern has

been the training of ambulance personnel. Although many services now have EMTs, some rural communities have had difficulty in receiving the required training of Red Cross advanced First Aid or its equivalent.

The Wrangler Division of the American National Red Cross in Great Falls and the EMS Bureau are now assisting areas in acquiring this training.

A number of services still are not maintaining satisfactory trip reports or maintenance records. The trip report information required is for the benefit of the patient, the ambulance services and the hospital.

The forms provide hospital personnel with information about the patient and his care prior to arrival at the hospital. In addition, the report provides for the ambulance service: information for billing, a background for planning special training programs, a background for improving operations and a record which might be helpful in any legal action.

Maintenance records help ensure an adequately functioning vehicle at all times.

Any service in need of more information regarding ambulance licensing can contact Jerry Luchau or Drew Dawson at the EMS Bureau, 1424 Ninth Avenue, Helena, MT 59601, phone 449-3895.

## EMS Communications To Have New Engineer

Tom Dufresne, chief of communications for Mountainhome Air Force Base in Mountainhome, Idaho, will be leaving the Air Force and coming to work for the Emergency Medical Services Bureau on March 17.

Dufresne a Montana native who received his degree in math from the University of Montana and obtained his communications expertise in the Air Force, will be working through the Communications Division of the Department of Administration.

He will report to Curt Wheeling, Communications Division Administrator, but will be working with the EMS Bureau in the same capacity that the late George Marshall did.

# Western Counties to Assess EMS Needs

The emergency medical needs of 13 Western Montana counties will be discussed at a regional Emergency Medical Services (EMS) conference in Missoula on March 18 and 19 at the Village Motor Inn.

The conference might lead to the formation of a regional association of counties to review and research the emergency medical needs of the region and to offer technical assistance to the counties in implementing an emergency medical services system, according to David Hunt, project director of the Robert Wood Johnson Grant Policy Board which oversees emergency medical services planning in Ravalli, Mineral and Missoula counties.

Another purpose of the conference is to review the grant application in which the 13 counties will be seeking funding as Region I of Montana.

Keynote speaker will be David R. Boyd, M.D., director of

Emergency Medical Services for the Department of Health, Education and Welfare in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Boyd will discuss the EMS Act of 1973 and its application for areawide planning of the components of an EMS system. On March 17, he will deliver a talk about the physician's role in developing an EMS system.

Also included in the conference will be workshops on training for ambulance attendants and the general public, hospital communications and dispatching, ambulance and equipment needs, disaster preparedness, critical care centers and emergency room improvement.

Anyone in the state who is involved with Emergency Medical Services is invited to participate. Pre-registration forms have been sent to EMS Council chairmen and those who need additional forms can contact Betty Doss at the

Western Montana Health Education Council, 500 West Pine, Missoula, MT 59801.

The 13 counties in the Western Region are: Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders, Lake, Missoula, Mineral, Powell, Granite, Ravalli, Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow and Madison.

Sponsors of the conference are: the Mountain States Regional Medical Program and its affiliate, the Montana Medical Education and Research Foundation; the Indian Health Service; the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency, Region 10; Comprehensive Health Planning's Region 5-B Agency; the Montana Ambulance and EMT Association; the state Highway Traffic Safety Division; the Emergency Medical Services Bureau of the Department of Health and Environmental Sciences; the Western Montana Health Education Council and the RWJ Policy Board.

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A Western Montana Regional EMS Conference will be held in Missoula March 18 and 19 at the Village Motor Inn.

The executive committee of the Governor's EMS Advisory Council will meet on March 14, tentatively, in Helena to review the statewide grant application.

A preliminary meeting to set the agenda for an air ambulance workshop, to be held later in the spring, tentatively will be held March 21 in Helena.

The Montana Heart Association Convention in May will have a portion of the convention devoted to Emergency Medical Services. The Registered Nurses will meet May 8 and 9, the physicians will meet May 9 and 10, and the annual membership meeting will be May 10. The convention will be held at Fairmont Hot Springs.

## Physician Appointed To Advisory Council

J. R. Sims, M.D., of Helena has been appointed to the Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council.

A Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, Dr. Sims is also a member of the American Medical Association, the Lewis and Clark Medical Society, the Montana Medical Association and the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Sims replaces John W. McMahon, M.D., of Helena, a member of the first Governor's EMS Advisory Council.

Emergency Medical Services Bureau  
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Helena, Montana 59601



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